

The Stranger Things In Life by orphan_account

Category: Life is Strange (Video Game), Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: After Eleven (Stranger Things) Closes the Gate, Alternate Universe, Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence, Alternate Universe - Still Have Powers, Crossover, F/F, F/M, M/M, Mileven, Other Additional Tags to Be Added, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder - PTSD, pricefield, references to other fandoms - Freeform

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Characters: Chloe Price (Life is Strange), Dustin Henderson, Eleven (Stranger Things), Jim "Chief" Hopper, Joyce Byers, Lucas Sinclair, Martin Brenner, Max (Stranger Things), Maxine "Max" Caulfield, Mike Wheeler, Other Character Tags to Be Added, Ryan Caulfield, Vanessa Caulfield, Will Byers

Relationships: Eleven & Mike Wheeler, Eleven/Mike Wheeler, Joyce Byers & Jim "Chief" Hopper, Joyce Byers/Jim "Chief" Hopper, Max & Lucas Sinclair, Max/Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Caulfield & Chloe Price, Maxine "Max" Caulfield/Chloe Price, Will Byers/Original Male Character(s)

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Summary:

It's been three years since the gate to the Upside Down was closed. It's been two weeks since they escaped the storm. But there are more secrets that have yet to be uncovered, secrets that will change all that they thought they knew, and two lives will never be the same again. (Takes place in 1987 instead of 2013. Test series, on hold for now. More details inside.)

EDIT: Changes were made to chapter 1 [NOT THE PROLOGUE] due to the realization of plot holes.

1. Prologue

Author's Note: So, I've been tossing this idea around in my head for a while now. I absolutely adore Stranger Things and Life is Strange. They're amazing. It wasn't until after I'd finished binge-watching ST2 that this idea came to mind. But I gotta change some details to make my vision a reality. So,

1) The events of Life is Strange will have occurred in 1987 instead of 2013. All will be explained why throughout the story.

2) I'm purposely setting the end of ST2 (in 1984) and the end of LiS three years apart for the sake of age differences. I'd prefer the characters of ST to be closer to Max and Chloe's age.

3) The story itself starts two weeks after the end of LiS on October 25th, 1987 following the prologue.

These are the only details I can officially express right now, but things may change. So work with me here, okay?

~*~*~*~

*September 21st, 1971

Hawkins, Indiana

10:43 pm.*

Two lab doors came crashing open, creating a loud 'bang' that echoed through the corridors. Lights along the walls flashed yellow in one second intervals and an alarm blared its warning to everyone in the building that something was going on. A man and a woman propelled themselves through the door. The woman hurriedly pushed the doors shut once they were through and the man assisted her in locating something to barricade them with. They used a desk from a nearby office, forcing it against the wall.

"Where's the exit?" the woman asked. She glanced up every hallway and reached down to feel the messenger bag hanging at her hip to make sure nothing was broken.

The man adjusted the sleeping toddler in his arms, swallowing thickly. "Two floors down. There's an exit down the hall from the staircase."

"Which staircase do we take?"

Suddenly, they heard something, or someone, trying to ram through the barricaded doors.

"We know you're out there! Stop running!" a voice demanded.

"Shit, shit!" the man swore under his breath. He looked down the left hallway and pointed. "This way, come on!"

The duo took off. Their shoes made loud slapping sounds against the tile as they ran, pushing themselves to put as much distance between them and the soldiers and scientists pursuing them as possible.

"Here." the woman stopped, gesturing to the door with a sign that read 'staircase' above it.

They hurriedly shoved themselves through the doorway just as they heard the doors back where they came from break from the hinges. They made their way down the stairs, skipping steps to make their escape faster. They reached the second floor, rounded the corner to descend to the first, and-

"Stop right there!"

Their faces were illuminated from the flashlight on the soldier's gun. They squinted against the beam and took a step back, the man tightening his hold on the toddler. She was still soundly asleep thanks to the anesthesia he injected her with. The woman held up her hands.

"Let us through." the man demanded, his expression hardening.

"You know we can't do that, Ryan."

Another man came around the corner, his hands folded behind his back and facial expression blank as he looked up at them from beside the soldier. His white hair was a bit tousled, his clothes slightly unkempt. The only signs that was under stress about this situation.

"What you're doing to these kids are wrong, Brenner." the woman piped up. She dropped her hands and stared him down. "They aren't guinea pigs, or aliens. They are children. They deserve a normal life."

"Other children can't do the things they can." Brenner took a step up. "They are far from having any kind of normal life. You're aware of this, Vanessa."

"That doesn't give you the right to keep them locked up in this place." Ryan argued.

"I will not discuss with you how I run my laboratory." Brenner's voice was tense. He was growing impatient. "Give me the child."

"Over our dead bodies."

Vanessa came down the stairs and, before anyone could react, struck Brenner across the face with her fist. Ryan was right behind her, stepping up to the soldier and swiping his feet out from under him. Brenner stumbled back against the wall and Vanessa took the initiative to grab the gun from the soldier before he could recover. She stood in front of Ryan as they backed out of reach, aiming the gun at Brenner.

"You will not follow us." she stated, her voice strict. "You will let us leave."

"You're not going anywhere." Brenner chuckled.

Vanessa pointed the gun just above Brenner's ear and fired without warning. Brenner flinched and ducked away from the shot, though the bullet still clipped his ear before burrowing into the wall behind him. His hand came up and brushed over the shell of his ear, pulling away coated in a thin layer of blood.

Vanessa glared at him, signaling for Ryan to go first. He hesitated only a second before continuing down the stairs and into the final level. Vanessa followed after him, not taking the gun off of Brenner until she was through the door. She nearly crashed into Ryan when she turned around. He sighed in relief, seeing she was safe, and nodded down the hallway. She returned his nod and followed him,

her gun armed at the ready. The child in his arms stirred a bit. The anesthesia was going to wear off soon.

They turned the corner and their stride picked up when they saw the exit. Vanessa hurriedly took out her ID card and scanned it to unlock the door. She held it open for Ryan and the two fled to the parking lot nearby. They approached the first car and Vanessa busted the window open, reaching in to unlock the doors. They climbed in, Ryan settling the child securely in the back seat.

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"They reached the parking lot! All units head to the gate now!" a man barked into his walkie talkie, glaring at the security footage before him. He could hear the thunderous pounding of the soldiers' boots as they stormed through the building to get to the gate.

"No. Let them go."

The man looked up from the cameras to find Brenner standing in the doorway with a soldier by his side, holding a bloody tissue to his ear. The man straightened up, raising an eyebrow.

"Sir?"

"Do as I say."

The man stared at him for another second before turning back to the intercom, pressing the button down. "All units stand down. I repeat, stand down." And the thundering slowed to a stop.

The man moved his chair back as Brenner approached the cameras, watching the car on screen come to life and peel out of the parking space towards the gate. He watched a hand come out to scan the ID and the gate opened to let them out. And they were gone.

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Vanessa headed down the dark alleyway, her knuckles white as she gripped the steering wheel a little too tightly. Ryan, in the meantime, was going through the messenger bag now at his feet. He pulled out one of the many vials that took up the main compartment.

"If we use them sparingly, they should last us a long time." he said, looking at his wife.

"And if they don't?" Vanessa croaked. Her throat was dry out of fright.

"Don't worry about that." Ryan said. "I spoke to Jenn the other day. She'll get us anything we need for as long as she can."

"Are you sure we can trust her?"

"She wants those kids out of there as much as we do. She'll help us."

Ryan glanced back at the girl slumped over onto the door in the backseat, his brow creased. "We'll have to change our names. We can't stay 'Telle' anymore."

"We'll figure that out later. Right now, we need to get somewhere safe." Vanessa said as she turned down another back road.

Ryan looked down at the girl's arm. His heart broke a bit when he saw the 'M4X' branded on her wrist. They'd also have to figure out how to explain that to her if they couldn't get it off her skin. But how? He turned back around to face the road ahead, his fingers tapping against his knee absently.

'M4X.' He thought. He smiled to himself. 'Max.'

She'd never know it, but this was the best birthday present they ever could have given her.

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Author's Note: So, this story will just exist for now as a mini side project that I'll be using for whenever I get my daily dose of writer's block. I have other stories to work on (and I know I'm piling things on to my already full plate but if I don't write and publish it now, then I never will) so don't expect too much too soon. I'll be lucky if I can get through this story.

But I thank you guys so much for reading! If you liked it, be sure to give it a kudos/bookmark/comment! I hope to see you guys

somewhere in the future with a new chapter!

CaptainVampireKing awaaay!

2. Chapter 1

Author's Note: Thanks so much for the positive response to this test run series! Here's the second chapter for you all!

In response to a review I received, there's a reason why I didn't "brand" Max like the others. What I'm doing is my own little headcanon that the kids kept in Hawkins Laboratory were marked based off of their kinds of abilities. You'll understand more as the story develops.

~*~*~*~

*October 25, 1987

Seattle, Washington

4:30 pm.*

"Max!"

Chloe Price opened the door to her best friend's home, bags of groceries in hand. She stepped inside and kicked the door closed gently behind her. Shuffling into the kitchen, Chloe set the bags down on the counter and stretched. "Max, I'm home!"

"Upstairs, Che!"

A smile broke out on Chloe's face and she made her way to the stairs, skipping them two at a time until she reached the top. She turned down the hallway towards Max's room, expecting to find her in there but noticing that the bathroom light was on. Her smile dissipated as her pace slowed a bit.

"Are you okay?" she asked.

She stepped in front of the bathroom doorway, finding Max hunched over the sink and washing her face. She was about to think nothing of it until she saw the water turning a faint shade of pink as it fell back to the basin. Her eyes widened, even more so when Max picked her head up to look at her. The lower half of her face was a mess of

watery blood.

"Nightmare." Max explained. She tried to give Chloe a reassuring smile, but it ended up looking more like an uncomfortable grimace.

"Shit, Max..." Chloe slipped into the bathroom and grabbed a small wad of toilet paper, slowly turning Max to face her and gently cleaning her mouth and chin before holding it to her nose.

Max's smile became more genuine, appreciative, as she moved in closer to Chloe and wrapped her arms around her. She took over holding the tissue so that Chloe could hug her back properly. She felt the bluenette nuzzle into her hair and kiss her head lightly. Max closed her eyes.

"Which one was it this time?" Chloe inquired quietly.

Max sucked in a breath. "The one where someone learned about my powers and locked me up in some facility to do tests on me." She trembled in the embrace and that made Chloe hold her tighter. "Like I was a fucking lab rat."

"That's not going to happen, Max." Chloe said. "We're too careful for any of that. When was that last time you even used your powers?"

"Only last week to keep you from burning yourself on the stove." Max admitted. "I haven't used them since, I swear."

"It's alright. I believe you." Chloe backed away a bit to smile at Max.

"I don't want to have a repeat of Arcadia..." Max's voice was hardly a whisper.

"I know."

It had only been two weeks since they escaped Arcadia Bay with just the clothes on their backs and Chloe's truck. They fled to Seattle to stay with Max's parents for the time being. It was a few days before they knew who survived and who didn't. Joyce, David, Kate, Victoria, Nathan, Frank amongst others survived. And it was only because Max had tampered with time before they left to ensure that Nathan and Victoria didn't fall victim to Jefferson. Warren, Dana, Hayden, Eric,

Ms. Grant, Samuel... They weren't so lucky. And Jefferson? He was killed by a falling tree trying to escape David. Max wouldn't have wanted it any other way, if she could be honest. Not even jail was good enough for the likes of him.

Max dropped her gaze and turned back to the sink, washing the remaining blood from her face as Chloe soothingly rubbed her back. She cleaned the sink and shut off the water, and Chloe turned the light off behind them as they exited the bathroom.

"I think I know what'll brighten your mood." Chloe said. Her impish smile was a perfect replicate of the one she had the night she suggested they sneak into the Blackwell pool.

"Do I really want to know?" Max said teasingly, smiling weakly.

"It just so happens that we're a few miles away from one of just under two hundred drive-in theaters not at risk of being shut down yet." Chloe hinted. "And said drive-in theater is having a Star Trek marathon starting in," -Chloe checked the clock on the wall- "two hours. Whaddya say?"

Max chuckled. "I thought you weren't a big fan of the Star Trek series."

"No, but I know you are and I'd sit through anything for you."

Max felt her heart swell at Chloe's words. While Chloe knew and respected that Max needed time before they fully established a more intimate relationship, she still made an effort to make Max's world brighter and happier when she was feeling down. Max was thankful for it every time and often found herself wishing that she could just be ready to be more than best friends with Chloe already. The feelings were there. They knew that. So why wouldn't they just... express themselves?

"That sounds perfect, Che." Max answered. Chloe's grin widening only increased the rapid beating of her heart.

"Then we should probably start getting ready."

~*~*~*~

*Hawkins, Indiana

7:46 pm.*

Thud.

Another kid's face was marked with a red 'x'. That was the third one this year. Jane Hopper stared at the picture of the boy with heavy discomfort. He was once a twenty-two year old man with the ability to control air. Bald, tall in stature, fairly built. He was marked M2X.

He was gone. Lost to a fire in the factory he worked in a year ago.

Jane hated when she found out that she failed to find her brothers and sisters in time. For the past three years, she dedicated any time she had to finding anyone else that was trapped in the laboratory before or with her based off the files she took when she was there three years ago. Back when she closed the gate to the Upside Down. There were way more than she thought there would be, and that made sense to her because not only was the building huge and have a bunch of secret areas, but that also wasn't their only location. Her and Kali weren't the only ones to escape. Brenner wasn't the first one to own the facility.

Despite the fact that she was sure Pa- Brenner was gone, she still didn't feel comfortable stepping back in that place herself again. So she made nice with someone on the inside to get her any information she could whenever she could. Some woman whose name she never got for confidential reasons. She'd just received her latest folder two days ago.

In three years, Jane and her friends located six others. A woman with the ability to see ghosts, number 003, who lived in Grandview, New York. A boy who had the power to become a ghost at will located somewhere in Pennsylvania. He wasn't born with his ability and therefore was never physically in the facility, but he was a person of interest to them and she worried that they would eventually try to take him away. She was intrigued to know that only she knew his real name and the scientists worked closely with "The Men in White" whom only referred to him as "Inviso-bill."

Yeah, she thought it was stupid too.

A girl born with the powers that resembled those of a witch, number 006, found in Chance Harbor, Washington. She didn't know of her powers. Yet. And that could change at any given moment. So Jane took it upon herself to keep a watchful eye on her so, if needed, she could get to her first.

But that's just to name a few. Even with the support of her friends, it didn't help the heartbreak she felt whenever she learned that someone was gone.

Jane sighed and set the stamper down on the table, picking up the folder beside it to find another person to look for. She flipped through the various faces, the different numbers, chewing on her lip absently. It was then that there was a knock on the door to her room.

"Come in." she said.

The door opened and her step-mother, Joyce Byers, peeked into the room. "Hey, hon." she said, a gentle smile on her face.

"Hi, mom." Jane replied. She didn't look up from the folder.

Joyce open the door wider and stepped into the room, walking up behind Jane slowly. She looked up to take in the map her step-daughter had created with all the faces of others with powers like her. She noticed the fresh red ink on the boy's picture and felt her heart sink a bit. She looked away to Jane. "I'm sorry you didn't find him how you hoped to."

Jane's actions hesitated for a second. "I can't expect to find all of them alive..." she said quietly.

"Yes, but I know it still hurts."

Jane looked up from the folder this time and turned to look at Joyce. She felt the pain returning to her chest. It did hurt. A lot. She set the folder back on the table and swallowed thickly. On instinct, Joyce opened her arms and Jane fell in to them, burying her face in her shoulder and trying not to cry. Joyce shushed her gently and patted her back.

"It's alright, dear." she encouraged. "You should still be proud of the work you've done, of those you've found. You've made better progress than I'm sure anyone else has or could."

Jane sniffled and tightened her hold on Joyce for a second before stepping back, reaching up to wipe her eyes. She did her best to return the smile Joyce was giving her.

"Dinner's almost ready, though. That's what I originally came up to tell you." Joyce said. "Max and the boys will be here any minute."

"Okay. I'll be down soon, promise." Jane said.

Joyce's smile turned warmer and she kissed Jane's forehead tenderly before leaving the room. She closed the door back and Jane sighed. She grabbed the folder once more and flipped through a few more profiles before coming to one that caught her interest. She took the paper out, setting the folder down, and turned towards the map. Her eyes scanned the paper.

~Subject: M4X (Manipulation, 4th Experiment)

DOB: September 19th, 1969.

Ability: Time Manipulation.~

Someone with the ability to control time?

~Escaped: September 19th, 1971.

Located: Arcadia Bay, OR on October 7th, 1987.

LKW: Arcadia Bay, OR on October 10th, 1987.~

Arcadia Bay? That sounded familiar. Why did that sound familiar?

Jane looked to the map, her eyes falling to Oregon. She hurriedly picked up a thumbtack from the box on the table and held the picture of the young girl over the state. She pinned it down and took a step back. This girl's last known whereabouts were recent. Too recent. Which means that something happened with her, something big enough for them to not only find her again, but lose her soon after.

She wondered how she managed to stay off the radar for so long like Kali.

Jane heard the downstairs front door open and the voices of her friends traveled through the house. She sighed. This was something that would have to wait until after dinner. She closed the folder and made her way out of the room and down the stairs.

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Author's Note: Y'know, I'm actually really glad I came up with this story as a way to help me through my writer's block. It forces me to think and come up with ideas and plans and so on. And as you can see by the new chapter, I'm currently experiencing it. But I hope you guys enjoyed and I also hope you recognized the references I made here. In case you didn't:

Avatar: The Last Airbender: Aang

Ghost Whisperer: Melinda Gordon

Danny Phantom: Danny Fenton/Phantom

The Secret Circle: Cassie Blake

That is all I have for you lovely readers today! Be sure to kudos/bookmark/comment if you liked it!

CaptainVampireKing awaaaay!

3. Chapter 2

Author's Note: I realized there were some plot holes in the last chapter, so I edited it. Whoops.

~*~*~*~

*Hawkins, Indiana

9:20 pm.*

"You think we have a chance at finding her?"

Jane, Mike, Dustin, Lucas, Will and Max were gathered in Jane's room, casually sitting in a semi-circle around the map. Lucas was the one to ask the question, raising his hand slightly to make sure their attention was on him. He was already pretty sure of the answer, since they all had something on their side that the bad men no longer did and that was Jane.

"Yes." Jane said sincerely.

"How did they just lose track of someone in a week?" Will asked.

"Your guess is probably as good as mine." Jane said. She looked to the map, pointing at the girl's picture. "But her last known whereabouts and the date they lost track of her co..." She paused, trying to think of the proper word. "...coincide with the tornado that hit the very next day."

The day the tornado wrecked Arcadia Bay it was all over nearly every news station, mostly requesting for support and donations to get the town on its way to getting back on its feet. That's why it had sounded so familiar. Jane saw the broadcast.

"So... Maybe their surveillance or whatever was knocked out by the impending storm." Max suggested. She looked around at the group. "High wind, heavy rain? Flying debris?"

"It's too likely." Mike said. He sat forward in his chair.

Jane smiled a bit at Mike's declaration. "Exactly. If it was just that, then they would have found her by now because they got the power back on in the town late last week. If they haven't relocated her by now-

"Then she could be anywhere." Dustin said. "She left."

"Whatever happened, m-four-x couldn't stay in the town." Jane said. She looked at each pair of eyes fixed on her, taking a second before saying, "I think she cause the storm."

"How would she cause the storm? It says her powers are manipulating time." Will said.

"Maybe she didn't cause it directly." Lucas said.

"How do you cause a storm indirectly?" Mike said. "We have yet to find anyone with unknown weather powers."

The group stood in silence for a minute, racking their brain trying to come up with some kind of idea of what they were up against. Dustin stood up and approached Jane's bookshelf, pulling out the stack of comic books she's collected or been given over time. The others looked over their shoulders at him, but said nothing. If anyone was going to make a proper connection, it would be Dustin.

Dustin started sorting through the comics, separating all the Flash ones from the pile. "Do you guys remember when the Flash built his Cosmic Treadmill?"

"Yeah, it was issue one-twenty-five right?" Mike said.

"Yeah." Dustin said, shifting through the Flash comics. "He built it so he could travel through time."

"I highly doubt this girl is using a treadmill to control time." Max said.

"She's not. But what if her controlling time started to break the very fabric of it?" Dustin looked up from the comics at his friends.

"What are you talking about?" Jane said.

"The Flash used his treadmill to travel through time and alternate realities." Dustin said.

"Where are you going with this?" Lucas said.

Dustin grabbed the comic he was looking for and approached the map. "Let's assume that she learned about her powers and used them. But not once, or twice, but excessively."

"That would create alternate realities because there could be a different outcome every time." Mike sat up straighter.

"And if she created too many-" Max began.

"-then that would disrupt the natural flow of time and force it to fall apart." Lucas finished.

"Which means that someone or something, maybe even nature itself, had to correct it." Will added. "Which could be where that tornado came from."

Dustin grinned, glad that they were getting it. "Exactly, yes!"

"But what could make her use her powers so much that she nearly fucked up time?" Mike said. "And wouldn't we of noticed if anything was happening with time?"

"Not really." Jane spoke up. "If anything, only she would be aware of the change in things. Anywhere, anything, or anyone else would be left out of the bubble and continue on like nothing happened unless she made a noticeable change to the environment. We don't even know if she has control of the future, past, or present."

"Do you think maybe she learned that she was being watched?" Will proposed.

"No. I don't think she knows about anything but her power." Jane said.

"Well, if she left during the outage, where could she have gone?" Mike said.

"That's what I'm gonna find out. We can't treat this like the others, find them and that's it. I think m-four-x is about as important to them as I was." Jane looked at the picture of the little girl. "We need to find where she is and go get her. Before they do."

"We can't just skip out on school." Will said.

Jane made a face. She hated when her step-brother had to be the voice of reason. She sighed and scratched her head. "Maybe if we talk to dad, we might be able to figure something out." Still, the thought of trying to convince her adoptive father to let them go on a trip to god knows where and getting into god knows what dimmed her hopes.

"Let's just start with finding out where she is." Mike said. He stood and reached for Jane's hand, giving it a reassuring squeeze. "Then we'll work out the rest of the messy details later."

Jane smiled at him. Even after four years of knowing him, three years of being together, she still felt her heart skip whenever she looked at or spoke to him. "Okay."

"We're gonna have to get home soon. So if we're doing this, we gotta do it now." Max said.

"Right." Jane said. "Let's get started."

The group dispersed, Lucas and Max leaving the room to locate a piece of paper and a pencil, Will heading to his room to grab his walkie talkie, Dustin going to get one of Hopper's ties to use as a blindfold, and Mike stepping over to Jane's TV to tune it to static. Jane reached up and took down the photo of the girl, staring intently at it for a second. She could only wonder how they knew she had powers when she was only two before she was broken out. Just like she wondered how they knew that she had powers. She knew she got them from her biological mother, but what if she wasn't born with them? What would have happened then? Would she be leading a normal life once they found her useless?

"El?" Mike said. He'd succeeded in tuning the TV and now had his attention fixed on his girlfriend. He was very aware that her name

was no longer Eleven, of course, but he'd gotten used to how the nickname felt on his tongue. Whereas everyone else had started calling her Jane, he mostly stuck to El. Though, every now and then, one of the others would say Eleven or El out of instinct. She never minded.

"Yeah?" she said, looking back at him.

Mike stood up and brushed his hands off on his jeans. "You okay?"

"I..." Jane began. But she caught herself. Friends don't lie. "No."

"What's wrong?"

Jane sucked in a breath. "What if we don't find her? What if she's dead like the others and that's why they can't find her?" If they knew where she was, why didn't they go after her? After anyone they know about?

"Don't think like that." Mike said.

"I can't help it." Jane admitted. "We've already found three of them dead, what if she becomes number four?"

"We'll find her, okay?" Mike placed his hands gently on Jane's shoulders.

"Promise?"

"Promise."

And Mike leaned down to kiss her softly, encouraging her closer to his body so he could wrap his arms around her. She easily relaxed into him, breathing out a relieved sigh through her nose as her arms went around his neck. They stayed like that for only a few seconds before they heard someone clear their throat. They didn't jump apart like most normal teenagers would do when they were caught being affectionate. They instead gradually pulled away from each other and looked to their friends standing in the doorway holding the required items.

Dustin held out Hopper's tie and Jane took it from him as the others

took seats around the room. Jane sat in front of the TV facing them and, with a determined look, raised the tie to her eyes.

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*Leavenworth, Washington

6:47 pm.*

Chloe turned into the drive leading up to the theater's entrance, Max leaning out the window to get as much of a look at the screen as possible. The thought of being able to relax with her best friend after so long grew more and more relaxing the closer they got to their location. And now that they were here, Max could truly say that her heart was at ease.

"Three minutes to spare." Chloe grinned from ear to ear, glancing over at Max once she'd succeeded in paying for their tickets. She put the truck in gear again and continued forward to look for a decent spot.

"Che, we would've been fine showing up three minutes late." Max giggled softly. "You know they take forever to get through previews."

"Hey, sometimes I like watching the previews." Chloe jokingly retorted.

"Such a dork." Max teased.

"Shut up and help me look for a spot."

Chloe circled around the lot, going as slow as possible so she wouldn't risk running in to anything while she looked for an open space. She didn't want to be too close, but she also didn't want to be too far.

"There's one!" Max eagerly pointed out the window to an available space, one that Chloe could easily back in to and open up the flatbed.

"Nice going, SuperMax." Chloe praised.

Chloe set the truck in reverse and crept backwards towards the

space, adjusting as she needed to. One she got it settled they got out and rounded to the back to unlatch the flatbed door. Max opened it up and Chloe climbed inside to spread out the blanket and pillows they brought with them. Max grabbed the speakers and fastened them to the sides of the truck before joining Chloe in the bed. She relaxed beside her, propped up against the window, and gave her best friend a warm smile.

"Thanks for this, Chlo." she said.

"No problem." Chloe returned the smile wholeheartedly. "I know it's been a crazy two weeks, and you know there's nothing more I want than to be there for you."

Max reached down and intertwined her fingers with Chloe's, pressing their palms together and resting her head on her shoulder. Even if she couldn't verbally express her feelings yet, she could take the baby steps needed to get there. For now, she'd find satisfaction in this in between space of her relationship with Chloe. The bluenette, albeit caught a little off guard by Max's actions, chuckled softly and leaned her head on top of Max's.

For once, everything felt like it was going to be alright.

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Author's Note: Before I sign off, I figured I'd enlighten you all on the original concept for this story (one that still might be put in to the works later on as a second version).

In the first planned draft for this story, both ST and LiS were going to happen in their respected eras. I was going to start two years after the end of LiS (2015), which would have been thirty one years after the end of ST2. Max and Chloe were going to have a definite romantic relationship and also going on a road trip that they had been planning for a while. One way or another they would come across the now abandoned, desolate town that was once Hawkins, Indiana. They find their way to the empty laboratory and uncover the secrets of the town, such as finding tape recorders, old newspapers, damaged security footage, etc. Max becomes determined to figure out what truly happened back then and, with her still evolving time

travel powers, manages to travel back in time with Chloe to some time between 1985 and 1988. Following that, they embark on an adventure with the ST kids to stop the impending doom that is threatening to take the town.

Like I said, it's still somewhat likely that I'll write this story somewhere in the future. Or, if someone wants to take over the project (but do credit me please), I'm entirely willing to share it out or assist with the work. It would be nice to have someone to write with again :)

But, with all that being said, I hope you enjoyed!

CaptainVampireKing awaaaay!